Claims

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for use in a computer network, the apparatus comprising:

at least one server within the network, the server being operative to process a client request generated by a client device to determine a particular client type associated with the client device, to retrieve web content identified in the client request, to retrieve one or more augmentation files associated with at least one of the web content and the particular client type, and to alter the retrieved web content in accordance with the one or more augmentation files, wherein the altered web content is delivered to the client device.

2. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the client device comprises at least one of a computer, a personal digital assistant, a wireless telephone and a voice browser-equipped device.

3. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the web content is at least partially in at least one of an HTML format and an XML format.

4. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein one or more of the augmentation files are co-located with the web content at a site remote from the server.

5. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein at least one of the augmentation files comprises a patch file.

6. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the server comprises an interpolating web proxy server configured between a device associated with the client and another server which provides the web content identified in the client request.

7. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the server determines the client type using at least one of an HTTP header element, a client-identifying cookie, and an HTTP GET request QUERY_STRING attribute.

8. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the server parses the retrieved web content into one or more component structures, and subsequently applies a pattern matching process to recognize designated component structure subject to alteration in accordance with the one or more augmentation files.

9. The apparatus of claim 8 wherein the pattern matching process utilizes a pattern matching expression comprising context, pattern, precedence and replacement elements.

10. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the context element comprises a structure scope constraining expression containing one or more instructions of the form pattern:replacement, each specifying a particular replacement from one of the augmentation files to be implemented upon detection of the corresponding pattern.

11. The apparatus of claim 9 wherein the precedence element specifies an order of application of the instructions associated with the context element.

12. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the received client request is associated with a plurality of different client devices, and the retrieved augmentation files comprise one or more augmentation files for each of the plurality of different client devices.

13. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the client device comprises a virtual client device having a combination of a plurality of different sets of features provided by multiple distinct physical client devices.

14. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the server processes the client requests such that the request appears to originate from a virtual client device having a combination of a plurality of different sets of features provided by multiple distinct physical client devices.

15. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein at least one of the augmentation files comprises an externally-retrievable augmentation file retrievable from another web server external to the at least one server and having at least a portion of the web content associated therewith.

16. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein at least one of the augmentation files comprises a default augmentation file stored on the at least one web server.

17. The apparatus of claim 1 wherein the server has access to a set of one or more default augmentation files, and the server is operative to attempt to retrieve a given one of the default augmentation files for use in altering the retrieved web content if the corresponding client request is determined to have no externally-retrievable augmentation files associated therewith.

18. A method for use in a computer network, the method comprising the steps of:

processing a client request generated by a client device to determine a particular client type associated with the client device;

retrieving web content identified in the client request;

retrieving one or more augmentation files associated with the web content and the particular client type; and

altering the retrieved web content in accordance with the one or more augmentation files;

wherein the altered web content is delivered to the client device.

19. A machine-readable medium for storing one or more programs for use in a computer network, wherein the one or more programs when executed by a processing system carry out the steps of:

processing a client request generated by a client device to determine a particular client type associated with the client device;

retrieving web content identified in the client request;

retrieving one or more augmentation files associated with the web content and the particular client type; and

altering the retrieved web content in accordance with the one or more augmentation files;

wherein the altered web content is delivered to the client device.

20. A processing system comprising:

a web server operative to store web content; and

an interpolating proxy server at least temporarily coupled to the web server and operative to process a client request generated by a client device to determine a particular client type associated with the client device, to retrieve web content identified in the client request and stored on the web server, to retrieve one or more augmentation files associated with the web content and the particular client type, and to alter the retrieved web content in accordance with the one or more augmentation files, wherein the altered web content is delivered to the client device.